**Paul:** Good afternoon, this is Paul Seacrest for the National Park Service. Today is Monday, September 25th, 1995. I'm in Whiting, New Jersey with Joseph Brady. Mr. Brady came from the north of Ireland in 1925 and he was 18 years when he arrived in the US. Can we begin Mr. Brady by you giving me your birth date please?

**Brady:** I was born August 13, 1906.

**Paul:** Where were you born?

**Brady:** In County of Armagh, Northern Ireland.

**Paul:** Can you spell the county name please?

**Brady:** A-R-M-A-G-H.

**Paul:** Where about in the north of Ireland is that?

**Brady:** That’s about 35 miles from Belfast which is one of the principle towns in Northern Ireland.

**Paul:** Were you born in a specific town or a village in that county?

**Brady:** Yes, our village was called Clady, C-L-A-D-Y.

**Paul:** Did you live in Clady the whole time that you were in Ireland, before you came here?

**Brady:** Unless while I went to school in Belfast for about 18 months, I suppose it.

**Paul:** But for the most of the time you were in Clady?

**Brady:** Most of the time I lived in Clady.

**Paul:** Can you tell me a little bit about Clady?

**Brady:** It was [unclear 00:01:25] country. In that time in Northern Ireland one of the big products was flax from which linen was made and I suppose very profitable until later on when linen fell out of a lot of use and then the economy went down after that. Of course Northern Ireland too was known for the ship building but we went [unclear 00:02:02] any ship work town.

**Paul:** Were there factories in Clady that converted the flax to--?

**Brady:** The nearest factory in a town called Market Hill and it did employ a lot of- I don't know how many but quite a lot younger people, a lot of girls were employed in the factory and making the linen.

**Paul:** Tell me what sticks out in your mind as a child about Clady, about the town itself?

**Brady:** I guess what sticks in my mind is going to school and I had a lot of friends there and we had a lot of fun. We went to a lot of dances and that kind of stuff.

**Paul:** Are there any buildings in that town that you remember specifically?

**Brady:** The only big building was the church and of course after that the school but the school was one room school house taught by a principle and an assistant, two teachers in the school.

**Paul:** What was the school made out of? What was the building constructed with?

**Brady:** I think it was made out of stone. It was built with masonry stones and with a sleuth roof.

**Paul:** What about your own house, can you describe what it looked like and how it was made?

**Brady:** Our own house was made of brick and it was consistent of kitchen and I guess three and four rooms and that is where I was raised and we had a garden where we raised vegetables and my mother raised a lot of roses. She was very fond of roses and we had a lot of roses around the building.

**Paul:** Is this a pre standing structure, that house?

**Brady:** Yes.

**Paul:** two stories’, one story?

**Brady:** One story.

**Paul:** One story, what kind of a roof did it have on it?

**Brady:** Sleuth roof.

**Paul:** Sleuth roof. Did it have a cellar?

**Brady:** No, cellar.

**Paul:** How was it heated?

**Brady:** By a coal stove in the kitchen that was the only heat we had.

**Paul:** How was it lit?

**Brady:** By a kerosene lamp.

**Paul:** Where would you get the coal and the kerosene?

**Brady:** From the village and they delivered I think coal you know when you called up and you needed coal, they came and delivered. I think a load of coal was about 1500 [unclear r00:04:44] and then the kerosene for the lamp we got in the nearest little village store.

**Paul:** Does anything stand out in your mind about the use of kerosene lamps from your childhood?

**Brady:** Not particularly. The one thing like you had watch with the kerosene lamp was keep the globe clean and you had to do that every evening I suppose and then you raised the wick by turning a little screw on the side of the lamp to turn off the light.

**Paul:** Can you describe for me the kitchen in the house? You mentioned there was a coal stove in there, what else was in the kitchen?

**Brady:** There was a shelf where my mother kept all the dishes and a table where we used to eat at and then the chairs and I think there was bench in it. That’s about all.

**Paul:** What kind of a floor does the house have?

**Brady:** A cement floor.

**Paul:** Cement floor because there's no cellar you said.

**Brady:** No cellar.

**Paul:** Can you tell me what kinds of vegetables you raised in the garden?

**Brady:** Mainly potatoes, we also raised peas, carrots, cauliflower and onions of course. I think that’s about all.

**Paul:** You mentioned your mother raised roses.

**Brady:** Yes.

**Paul:** Does anything stick out in your mind about her raising the roses or do you have a story about her and her roses that you like to tell?

**Brady:** No, she was very fond of roses and raised them especially around the door and around the windows she had these tiny roses which made the taste very nice and we lived across away from the school and I only had to walk across the road to go to school and the other thing I remember about my mother the kids used to always laugh with her and when I got out to lunch we'd come across the road to my mother to get a drink or take some milk or something and she was very popular with all the kids in the school.

**Paul:** Very convenient for them.

**Brady:** Yes.

**Paul:** Was there a front yard to this house?

**Brady:** We called it a street, it was just about 30 yards wide and then there was a fence between the road and the street.

**Paul:** Did your mother or father ever tell you anything about your birth? Do you know anything about when you were born?

**Brady:** Very little, I don't remember and I don't remember them telling me anything.

**Paul:** What was your father's name?

**Brady:** John Brady.

**Paul:** What did he do for a living?

**Brady:** He was a mail man.

**Paul:** Really? Can you talk a little bit about his job as a mail man?

**Brady:** Yes, he was what we would call on the rail road here, he worked a swing shift. He would go out in the morning, pick up the mail and deliver it and he walked all over around. He walked about six or seven miles every day delivering mail then he was through with about lunch time and then in the afternoon, he went to the post office and took it down to another village where they picked up the mail, their outgoing mail. Of course being a mail man, he knew everybody in the village.

**Paul:** What did your father look like? Describe him in words for me.

**Brady:** The big thing I remember about my father, he was tall but he had a very flowing moustache and that’s about all I remember about him.

**Paul:** Can you talk a little bit about his personality?

**Brady:** As I remember he was very jolly and he could sing. I remember him singing quite a bit and most of the people that he talked to liked him and they would always coming and talk to him especially when we went to church on Sunday, they would come and speak to my father and ask him about several things and then going around and talking to all the farmers.

He knew quite a bit about farming and sometimes he would advise them what to do or if they were sick he would always give them advice, tell them what to do and possibly give them some remedy that could help cure the animals.

**Paul:** Had he been a farmer beforehand? How did he acquire this [inaudible 00:10:11]?

**Brady:** Yes, his parents were farmers, so yes.

**Paul:** Do you remember his parents?

**Brady:** I remember his mother but not his father.

**Paul:** What do you remember about your grandmother on your father's side?

**Brady:** I remember that she was an old lady and I remember that she was very very fond of my mother. That my mother and her used to have little talk sessions together with nobody else around. That’s about all I remember about her.

**Paul:** What was your mother's name?

**Brady:** My mother’s name was Ann.

**Paul:** And her maiden name?

**Brady:** Maiden name was Duncan.

**Paul:** Can you spell that please?

**Brady:** D-U-N-C-A-N. I think her family were originally Scott because her uncle as I remember, her Uncle Tom used to come on vacation in the summer time and he lived in Glasgow. I don't know whether originally from Scotland but I knew they had a lot of Scott’s connection.

**Paul:** What was your mother's personality like?

**Brady:** Well, she was a very loving kind of a person and I said the kids all loved her and of course we did too but she was a disciplinarian. My father never had to correct us, my mother always did the- if anybody how to be talk to or disciplined, she was the one who did it. My father was always back herself but it’s something that she did but she made sure that we were corrected enough.

**Paul:** What were some of the rules in the house that the children had to follow? What were some of the ground rules of living in your parents’ house?

**Brady:** The main thing was that you had to keep all your clothes clean and keep all your own possessions individually and you had to care of them. It was your responsibility to take of that and we were designated to do certain chores around the house like I was designated to get the coal for the fire in the morning and to kindling for the fire. I remember that being my chore.

**Paul:** I should say for the sake of the tape that Mrs. Brady had joined us. You can if you'd like, just don't walk in and out [chuckle] because the microphone will pick up all that. Your mother - tell me some of her chores around the house, what were her responsibilities in the house?

**Brady:** First always feeding us and cooking for us and then of course she had to do the washing and Ironing and she didn't have any washing machine, she washed in the tub with a wash board and then we had a line outside in the garden where she hung the clothes out to dry and then took them in and ironed them and put them away and made sure that we were dressed up especially for Sunday and going to school.

**Paul:** Do you remember the process of ironing. Can you just describe what that entailed at that time?

**Brady:** Yes, she had a very modern iron for that time. You had to heat it and you put the heater in the stove and then you open up a little thing in the back of the iron and put the heat. It was [unclear 00:14:18] and you put the iron inside it. They also had flat irons such that you could put on top of the stove but this you put this iron in and then it didn't soil the trouser or anything, you could always keep it all very clean.

**Paul:** Did you have running water in the house?

**Brady:** No, we had to get our water from the well outside the house. We called the spring well and that supplied water for the whole village.

**Paul:** Was there a certain routine that you followed concerning getting the water?

**Brady:** Yes, one of my brothers was the one who got the water. He carried, went to the well and got the water in the cans and brought us [unclear 00:15:04].

**Paul:** Toilet facilities?

**Brady:** No, we didn't have running water. We had a toilet outside and then you flushed with a pail of water.

**Paul:** Tell me brothers and sisters. Did you have brothers and sisters?

**Brady:** Yes, I had six brothers, no sisters.

**Paul:** Can you name them all for me?

**Brady:** Yes, my oldest brother was Charles, then we had James, Michael, William John, Thomas, myself and Leo.

**Paul:** William John is one person?

**Brady:** One person yes.

**Paul:** Right, how many years span between the oldest and the youngest?

**Brady:** Let’s see, I guess about 16 years.

**Paul:** Do you know what year your parents were married?

**Brady:** No, I don't [chuckle].

**Paul:** Do you know how they met?

**Brady:** I don't.

**Paul:** You mentioned a little bit before that one of your mother's responsibilities was feeding the family, what did you eat in Ireland in this period?

**Brady:** Something like what we eat today. My mother made the bread and she got the flour and mostly we ate homemade bread. It was a treat when we got as we called the store back end bread but she made the bread and for breakfast we generally had tea rather than coffee.

We had bread and butter and eggs more than anything else and sometimes bacon and tea and then for lunch we had bacon and [unclear 00:17:08] and potatoes and cheddar sometimes and made a lot of soup and I think that was about all and then for supper we always had oatmeal porridge and the local name for it was stirabout. I don't know why they called stirabout but in some of the old books that I read I see that they call it stirabout.

**Paul:** And then what would you drink for breakfast, for a beverage while you're eating your stirabout?

**Brady:** Milk, fresh and sometimes butter milk but mostly fresh milk.

**Paul:** What times were these meals? What time was breakfast?

**Brady:** We started off about 8 O'clock in the morning. The dinner was always at noon time and between 12 and 1 O'clock and then the supper at 6 O'clock in the evening. Sometimes we had tea in the afternoon, afternoon tea which was just bread and butter and tea and then the supper was around 8 O'clock.

**Paul:** What would your mother prepare for a special occasions? Did she have a special food that she made for certain occasions?

**Brady:** That was mostly cake. If we were having company she would make what she called a current cake. She would make like soda bread with resins and fruit berry.

**Paul:** What did she call it, current?

**Brady:** A current made of currents.

**Paul:** Oh Current like berries. What about for religious holiday for instance like Christmas, was there a certain meal that you ate at that time?

**Brady:** Yes, we always had steak for Christmas, that was one of the things we had and then we had pudding you know plumed pudding.

**Paul:** A steamed pudding.

**Brady:** Right, that was the specialty so then the regular meal on the side. That was one of the times of the year where we had steak. We were very excited about steak.

**Paul:** How much of your food did you produce yourself and how much of it was purchased?

**Brady:** Well, we produced most of the potatoes and most of the vegetables. I think we produced all the vegetables we ate and then of course bacon and meat we got from the butcher. That was all unless the resins and stuff like that they'd be bought for making cake.

**Paul:** You've got five brothers and yourself did you say?

**Brady:** Six brothers and myself.

**Paul:** Six brothers, so there seven boys in the family.

**Brady:** Seven boys.

**Paul:** What was your job specifically? Did you have a chore in the house? You mentioned your brother had to get the water, one brother.

**Brady:** Then I think I mentioned before that I was the one who set up the kindling for the fire in the morning and got the coals and then all set it ready so when my mother got up, or the boys got up first they put the kindling in and then started out the fire.

**Paul:** Where did the wood come from?

**Brady:** We had a lot of bushes and a lot of trees around and we used to go around and gather the broken down branches and stuff like that. That was mostly what we used.

**Paul:** Did your family keep animals?

**Brady:** Just a dog, we always had a dog.

**Paul:** Do you remember a specific dog from your childhood?

**Brady:** Yes, one dog- I don't know what breed it was, I guess a mixed breed. We called Rollo.

**Paul:** Rollo, is there a story about Rollo that you can remember?

**Brady:** Yes, I remember that my mother liked the dog very much because she said once when I was small I wondered away and there was a stream near, like a little brook and she saw me down by the brook and she was worried but when she went out and saw the dog was always keeping between me and the stream, so I wouldn't wonder too near it. She always told me that.

**Paul:** Tell me about what games you played as a child? How did you entertain yourselves when you were kids?

**Brady:** Mostly football, that was Gaelic football, it’s not like that football, it’s more like soccer but the Gaelic football you're not permitted to touch the ball. Pardon me, you can touch the ball, in soccer you're not supposed to touch the ball unless take it with your feet or with your head but the football we played you could catch the ball and you could run with it for only three steps and then you had to either kick it or throw or something.

That was the main thing and I guess that was about all the games we played and then of course in the evenings we used to play cards a lot.

**Paul:** What card games did you play?

**Brady:** Something, we called 25. I'm not too sure what game you could compare and we're Irish. I think they have a game among the Irish and here they call it Euchre or something like that. It was played with five cards and you got the game when you got 25 and 5 and 6 or something like that. We played that a lot.

**Paul:** What was the name of the card game, Euchre?

**Brady:** Euchre.

**Paul:** How do you spell that?

**Brady:** E-U-C-H-E-R, I think. Something like that, I'm not too sure.

**Paul:** Would the cards be something the whole family did or just the kids?

**Brady:** Oh no, the whole family could play and sometimes did sit in but mostly it was the kids and then of course when the older people said we weren't allowed to play unless once in a while when we were short of- we used to play partners and sometimes when there won’t be enough to make like if there weren't eight people there if there were only seven then one of us kids would sit in until somebody had to come in.

**Paul:** Were there ways the entire family entertained themselves? Did you do something special altogether?

**Brady:** No, very little. We generally had a lot of neighbors come in and I think that was the root of the place where I lived that you always had visitors. In the evening the neighbors would come in and sit around and chat or us we would go to our neighbor’s house and sit around and chat and that’s generally what we did.

**Paul:** Was your family musical at all?

**Brady:** I think my brother Charlie was the only. He played the violin. He was the only one that was musical. I tried one time to play the flute and I wasn't too successful.

**Paul:** You started talking about school earlier, the school was right across the [crosstalk 00:25:04]. Tell me what sorts of things stick out in your mind about the experience of going to school as a kid?

**Brady:** Well, I don't remember anything but I know we had as I said the principle was always a man and the assistant was generally a young lady and she taught what we call here kindergarten. We call it infants there and she called infants class, first, second class. Then after you got from second class you went to the master’s side of the room and he taught third, fourth, fifth and sixth grade.

Then what we usually did we did a lot of silent reading you know we'd sit down and he would give us passage in the book to read and we would sit down and then he would question us to see how much we learnt from it and we read Shakespeare and Oliver Goldsmith who was an Irish writer and history and when we talked geography, we stood up and looked at the map because there weren't no seats for all of us.

We stood in a circle around and the teacher pointed out places on the map and then next time we come back, he'll ask us about the places so we learnt quite a bit geography that way.

**Paul:** Were you taught any Gaelic at the school?

**Brady:** No, I don't think we were taught yet, we were taught Gaelic separately and I learnt my prayers in Gaelic, little conversations but that’s all. I don't think I could carry on conversations with anybody in Gaelic, no though I could understand quite a bit of what they’re saying.

**Paul:** But in your home you spoke English?

**Brady:** Oh yes, all the time English.

**Paul:** So Gaelic would just be a second language.

**Brady:** A second language yeah.

**Paul:** In school is there a story that you can remember about maybe one of your classmates in school? Does one of them stick out in mind? Do you have a story about someone you went to school with at that time?

**Brady:** The only thing that I vividly remember is on one of the holidays, somebody got one of these- what do you call the things that you light up at the 4th July?

**Paul:** Like a sparkler?

**Brady:** A sparkler and we were standing in two rows because we were a lot of us and he got in the back row and somehow he lit the sparkler and of course that [unclear 00:28:29] caused him to get punished. I think there was a girl standing of him and she yelled and jumped and the sparkler went off and that’s [inaudible 00:28:44].

**Paul:** How would they punish you in school if you did something you weren't supposed to?

**Brady:** They gave you a slap, slapped your hand and the teacher hit it sometimes with a ruler but more of the time with a stick about 18inches long or short that he had picked out of the hedge and depending on the severity of your crime you got so many slaps. Sometimes you got two on one hand, two on the other which was big punishment.

**Paul:** Do you remember an instance where you were punished in school?

**Brady:** No [chuckle].

**Paul:** You're remembering something, I can tell.

**Brady:** I do remember we had one boy in school, he was little dull but not too bad but he was so scared of the teacher that he gave a silly answer or [unclear 00:29:51] and the teacher got so aggravated and got very mad and he gave him slaps on the hand and then he hit him across the back of the neck with it and I got so enraged.

I went up pulled the stick out of his hands and broke it across my lap and walked out of the school and I'd forgotten all about that until I went to Ireland and one of my classmates told me I did and he said, "Do you remember the time you beat the master?" And of course that brought it back to me.

I went home and only across the street as you see and my mother say, "You have to go back to school right away, you child." So I said, "If you permit me to stay home this afternoon, I will go back tomorrow." And I went back tomorrow and the teacher never paid any attention that anything has happened. Kids loved me after that.

**Paul:** What were your parent’s views about education? How did they feel about education? Was that important to them?

**Brady:** Very important, you had to go to school. You couldn't stay home from school for any reason unless you were very sick. As a matter of fact my mother didn't have any education. I think she left school when she was less than 13 years old and she couldn’t read or couldn't write and I'm often surprised now that us boys were all reading and all this but didn't try and teach her but we didn't and my father was very well. He had a very good basic education. Of course he had to pass some kind of an examination before he got the job as post man.

**Paul:** When you were small children did you parents offer any kind of educational instructions at home?

**Brady:** No, there's one, my mother made sure that my older brothers looked up what our homework was and that we did our homework.

**Paul:** Now some of your brothers are quite a bit older than you, correct? Are you the next in the young list?

**Brady:** I'm the next in the young list, all my brothers are dead.

**Paul:** So some of them would have been young men when you were a child?

**Brady:** Right.

**Paul:** What do you remember about their lives? What were they doing when they were 14 and 15?

**Brady:** We didn't have a big farm, we didn't have just as small and I think they worked with farmers in the neighborhood you know like day workers and they got paid for that whatever they got paid.

**Paul:** So they didn't live with the farmers they just went?

**Brady:** They just went day in and day in and stayed home. My brothers never stayed away from home for a night that I don't know.

**Paul:** Did your mother seek employment outside of the house?

**Brady:** No, she was kept pretty busy taking care of us guys.

**Paul:** [inaudible 00:33:24]. What religion were you?

**Brady:** We were Roman Catholic.

**Paul:** And you mentioned there was a church in town?

**Brady:** Right.

**Paul:** What was the name of the church?

**Brady:** Saint Michael.

**Paul:** Tell me a little bit about your religious life at that time with your family?

**Brady:** Well, the main thing of our religious life as the boys was we had to go to church on Sunday, we had to go to mass on Sunday and I think that we also said the rosary every day in the evening in our house and when we were old enough we work on farms and I think that’s about it.

**Paul:**  Who was the most religious of your parents?

**Brady:** Oh my mother.

**Paul:** And what were some of the ways that she expressed her interest in religion to the children or at home?

**Brady:** Well, I suppose the fact that she made sure that we went to church all the time and I must say that that was about all I remember of her and she taught us our prayers and ensured we knew our prayers.

**Paul:** Is there a priest that sticks out in your mind from that time and period or someone connected with the church that you think of when you think of the church?

**Brady:** The one that I think of the most is there were a parish priest on the church, he was a younger man and he was always nice to us kids and I remember him, his name was O’Brien, father O’Brien. I always remember him and coming out of me and he came to school and very often he came to school and he brought candy for us or something like that, so that’s what I remember about him.

**Paul:** Were there times during the year when the priest would be invited into your house for any reason?

**Brady:** No, unless somebody were very sick, he wouldn't be invited but the priest would drop in casually and just come in and say, "Hello," and maybe sit down and have a cup of tea or something like that but we never invited him formally or anything like that.

**Paul:** Did the school offer any kind of religious training for education?

**Brady:** Yes, one half hour every day we had religious instructions they called them and we had some protestants come to our school and they were released, they could go home when we got that and I don't know where they got any religious instructions, at home I'm sure because they went to our school and the teacher treated them just normally like us guys and then would come there and of course we envied this because they got out half an hour earlier than we did.

**Paul:** What was the religious makeup of the town?

**Brady:** I would say about 50-50.

**Paul:** 50% catholic.

**Brady:** And 50% protestants. I don't know whether they were Presbyterians or what they were.

**Paul:** Were there any other religions in town other than the Catholics and the Protestants that you can remember at that time?

**Brady:** I don't remember them but I know now that later on as I begin to distinguish many religions, I knew there were some Quakers and there are quite a few Quakers all over Ireland but I know we had some in the little town.

**Paul:** At the time what was the relationship like between the Catholics and the Protestants groups in your town?

**Brady:** Very cordial, if one of the catholic people died and they brought the remains in church, some of our protestants neighbors would come and come to the ceremony and come to church and if anything happened, any misfortune happened among one of the Catholics, protestants were there to help out and the same with the catholic also was any protestant there they went. We knew they were Protestants but there was no big distinction.

**Paul:** Was there a geographical difference and all the Catholics were stayed in one part of town and all the protestants [crosstalk 00:38:47]?

**Brady:** Yes, mostly. The Protestants all lived in the southern and then they were mixed. There was no big division but there was a second [unclear 00:39:02] around the Protestants church are mostly Protestants only I guess but there wasn't any fine drawing lines.

**Paul:** Well, it’s a small town and they can't live that far away.

**Brady:** No.

**Paul:** Tell me a little bit about the period of the beginning of World War 1, the Irish revolution, the 19 teens? Can you talk about that period and what sticks out in your mind? You would have been 10 in 1916? What do you remember about that period?

**Brady:** Well, I remember the time World War 1 started which was in 1914 and then I remember, I think my father he came home early and we all wondered what happened and he said, "We didn't get any mail this morning," the country just started the war so disruption.

Then I remember one of our neighbors was in the army, was in the English army and he lost both of his legs and I remember he coming home and that’s about all. Then of course I come to the Irish part of that was 1918 I suppose and that it was an election then, the group that finally we got Irish independence, it was called [unclear 00:40:45] and they put up a candidate for election and of course there were a lot of electioneering speeches and I remember that but that candidate failed and [inaudible 00:41:04].

Actually, there wasn't any fighting or any ambushes during that period and then I went off to Belfast to school and there was no actively ambushing and no fighting around where I camped.

**Paul:** When you went to Belfast to go to school, during this period. What do you remember about that as the situation would have been a little different [crosstalk 00:41:37]? What did you witness in Belfast?

**Brady:** I remember rioting and fighting in Belfast.

**Paul:** Can you describe it a little bit more in detail?

**Brady:** Well, I think one of the things that precipitated a lot of trouble in Belfast was the big industry there as I said was ship building and all the Catholics were put off the place where the ship building, they lost their jobs and then of course they started to get guns and started shooting, as they shot at this people that they figure were discriminating them and then of course the English soldiers come in, England send over soldiers and they were there to try and keep peace between them.

**Paul:** And what do you remember seeing at that time? What did you experience?

**Brady:** Well, I remember where I was staying, I remember four English soldiers came up and they put a machine gun and just sprayed because there's nobody on the street but I guess the fact that people [unclear 00:43:03] and that’s about the thing I remember about that but I never anything that bothered me.

**Paul:** Why did you go to Belfast to school?

**Brady:** Actually, my teacher at that time thought that I would make a good candidate for civil servant and that was English civil servant and there was a school in Belfast that did grinding for this particular examination- [unclear 00:43:41] was the exam but I went there to sharpen on the subjects that they ask then when I was ready to take the exam they stopped, they were only giving it to ex-servicemen, so I lost that and I come back home.

**Paul:** What year was it that you went to Belfast?

**Brady:** 1921 or 22.

**Paul:** And tell me about things that you saw in Belfast that were new to you, that you hadn't seen from your town?

**Brady:** Of course I never saw a movie, the first movie I saw was Charlie Chaplin and the kid Jackie Coogan and of course we didn't have any buildings any more than two storeys high. The school I went to were on the fourth floor in the school and of course they had trolley cars and [inaudible 00:44:49] and they had the street lighting, the street lighting was gas and we had a lamp lighter on your arm with a sticker, each individual lamp so I thought that fascinated me.

**Paul:** Had your parents ever been to Belfast in their life [inaudible 00:45:19]?

**Brady:** No, I don't think so.

**Paul:** Had any of your brothers?

**Brady:** Yeah, one of my brothers hadn't been in Belfast but he came there because I was there he came to visit me.

**Paul:** How did you feel when you were in Belfast about being there and being away from your family?

**Brady:** Well, first I was very very lonely because I was staying in a boarding house and there were I think four other boys my age and we had a pretty good time ourselves.

**Paul:** Were you disappointed when you had to return?

**Brady:** Of course I was because I thought that I was going to go to London if I was to pass this examination.

**Paul:** What did you do when you got back to the town?

**Brady:** I worked with the farmer and then I worked on making roads. Working on the roads, the roads had to be carpeted and they always had men working on the roads and I got a job there until I went to America.

**Paul:** What were the roads like in this town?

**Brady:** Well, I thought they were very tremendous wide roads and everything until I came to America and back and was surprised how narrow they were [chuckle].

**Paul:** But how was the road [crosstalk 00:46:51] roads at that time or were they dirt?

**Brady:** No, they were paved. The pavement was put rock on them and then I think just soil among the rock and then they had a steam roller and they rolled that, they put water and rolled at and it made a good solid steady road.

**Paul:** And what was your job in all of that?

**Brady:** Doing anything and everything. Mostly they put me alongside the road to keep the [unclear 00:47:28], I wasn't given any heavy work, I was a boy and then at lunchtime I was the one who went into some farm house and had them make tea and they were always happy to make tea for us. We brought our own tea and stuff, they had boiled water and that’s what I did most of the time.

**Paul:** Were you paid a daily wage to do this or was it like a weekly?

**Brady:** A weekly [inaudible 00:48:03] and I don't remember what it was, I think about 15 shillings a week which was at that time $3.

**Paul:** Did you keep the money that you made?

**Brady:** No, I always gave it to my mother and she gave me some money for cigarettes or go to a dance or whatever.

**Paul:** Was that also the same situation with your older brothers?

**Brady:** Yes, everybody come and give their money to my mother and she gave back and if you ever needed anything important. When we bought clothes and my mother was a good bargainer, she went with us to buy our clothes or shoes.

**Paul:** So your father's income as a mail man was supplemented by his children?

**Brady:** Whatever we did.

**Paul:** ` You mentioned buying cigarettes. I have to ask you how old were you when you started to smoke?

**Brady:** I guess I was 14.

**Paul:** Do you remember how you started to smoke? Who taught you?

**Brady:** One of the kids at school had a pack of cigarettes, we could get a little pack of cigarettes with [unclear 00:49:23] per I think two pences something like that. We didn't know we'd have the two pence to buy the cigarettes, so we couldn't smoke all the time so we smoked when we got the price of a pack of cigarettes.

**Paul:** And do you remember the brand names?

**Brady:** Yes, I do. It was Woodbine.

**Paul:** Woodbine like the plant.

**Brady:** Right and we didn't say a pack of cigarettes we said a packet of woodbines.

**Paul:** Did anyone else in your family smoke?

**Brady:** I think they all smoked, my father smoked the pipe and I think all my brothers smoked.

**Paul:** Did your mother smoke?

**Brady:** No, she didn't smoke.

**Paul:** When you were growing up in Ireland, what did you know about America? Before you got here how did you perceive America?

**Brady:** I knew of course that if you were willing to work in America that you could always get a job which wasn't the case in Ireland and that if you didn't, I always thought that if you didn't work here and you were sober and watched your steps that you could make quite a bit of money and that way you'll be quiet comfortable and I knew that the price of certain things that you know in Ireland you would have to work about two weeks to make the price of a set of clothes and here you could buy a set of clothes with one week’s salary and have some money left for yourself and that’s about all I knew about it.

**Paul:** Did you know anyone who had gone to America?

**Brady:** Oh yes, but I didn't talk much to him you know they were older than me but my brother was as I said before my brother was out here, my brother came to America.

**Paul:** Which brother was that?

**Brady:** My oldest brother Charlie.

**Paul:** And what year did Charlie come?

**Brady:** 23' I think.

**Paul:** And where did he go when he got here?

**Brady:** In New York City.

**Paul:** Did he have a sponsor in New York City or?

**Brady:** As a matter of fact a girl from home came home on a vacation from there and Charlie and her fell in love and he came back with her. I don't know how just how she managed to get him in but I guess she sponsored him [chuckle]. That’s how he came.

**Paul:** What job was Charlie doing when he first got to America?

**Brady:** I think he did several jobs until he went to work in the subway, he was a subway conductor.

**Paul:** That’s interesting, is that before you got here?

**Brady:** Before I got here but I got here he was a subway conductor.

**Paul:** Do you know any stories that he might have told you about his experiences as a subway conductor?

**Brady:** No, he got me a job in the subway when I came.

**Paul:** While you were still in Ireland was he writing back?

**Brady:** Of course.

**Paul:** What was he telling you about his life?

**Brady:** I don't think he wrote particularly to me but he did that he write to his parents and generally wrote to my mother and then we all shared in the letter.

**Paul:** How did your parents view his going to America? How did they feel about that?

**Brady:** My father thought it was a good thing but my mother was very upset when he left.

**Paul:** Do you remember when Charlie left for America?

**Brady:** I was in Belfast at that so I do remember because he stopped in Belfast to say goodbye to me then he was gone.

**Paul:** What made you decide to that you wanted to come to America?

**Brady:** I thought that I never could make much money in Ireland and it was always a hand to mouth existence I felt but I felt if I came to America I could do better, I could make some money and be independent, I thought.

**Paul:** How did you parents feel about your decision to go to America?

**Brady:** They didn't mind me coming so much because they knew that my brother was here and that he was established that time that he was married and that I was coming to him and he was sure to look after me.

**Paul:** Did he marry the girl that he--?

**Brady:** Yes, he did.

**Paul:** He did. Tell me a little bit about the whole process of getting ready to go. What did you have to do prior to leave in Ireland?

**Brady:** I think you had to have some money, you have that $50. You had to go to fill out a form, go to a doctor that certified that you were physically fit and go to your clergy man and get a letter that you are of good character.

**Paul:** Do you remember doing all those things?

**Brady:** I do, I remember especially going to my parish priest who was new in there so he said, "How do you expect me to give you a reference, I don't know you and I've only been here a short time?" So I was pretty spicy I said, "But don't mind father, I know Mr. [unclear 00:55:20], he's known me a little time and he's also a pastor." That was a protestant clergyman, I said, "I'm sure he can give me." He can give me whatever he can to [unclear 00:55:32]. Then he said, "I'll give you."

**Paul:** Competition [laughter]. What about in terms of medical information, what did you have to do before leaving Ireland if anything, the physicals?

**Brady:** You had to get the physicals, mainly I think the doctor looked at my chest, listened to my heart and that was about it.

**Paul:** Where was that doctor that you went to?

**Brady:** In Market Hill, the little village.

**Paul:** Was this a doctor that you had had interaction with before?

**Brady:** I guess my parents did but I never been to the doctor before in my life.

**Paul:** Do you remember being ill as a child at all or anything like that?

**Brady:** No.

**Paul:** Do you remember any kind of home medicinal remedies that maybe your mother made if someone was sick?

**Brady:** I think if we got a cold, I think what my mother used to do was feed us a little whisky punch and put us to bed and that’s seemed to cure all ills [laughter].

**Paul:** Tell me about packing, what did you pack to take with you to America?

**Brady:** I packed underwear, socks, two shirts and a sweater, that was it and then the clothes that I wore.

**Paul:** Did you get any new clothes prior to leaving?

**Brady:** Yes, I got a new suit.

**Paul:** Can you describe the suit and the process of going to have it [inaudible 00:57:23]?

**Brady:** Right, I went to the tailor, my mother knew the tailor and he always made suits and I went to him and he measured me for a suit and I got a suit, made to measure. This was a big deal.

**Paul:** Do you remember the color of the suit?

**Brady:** Yes, it was blue with the stripes in it.

**Paul:** Do you remember how much it cost?

**Brady:** No, I can't remember. I think about 5 pounds, I'm not too sure.

**Paul:** Did you pack any objects to take with you, something other than clothing?

**Brady:** No.

**Paul:** Nothing to bring to your brother in Ireland or a memento or a bible or something?

**Brady:** No, nothing.

**Paul:** Was there some kind of a sendoff for you?

**Brady:** No, for me there was no send off for which I was glad but that was a regular thing at that time when you were going. As much in fact they called it a wake and all the neighbors gathered around and they did singing and dancing and stuff like that but that was sending you off.

**Paul:** Why would they call that a wake?

**Brady:** Because in those days they figured once you went to America you were dead, you never came back. Prior to that time very few people that went to America, they stayed here and they never came back. Of course you get married here and then you have children I suppose never could get enough money for a passage.

**Paul:** What was the hardest thing for you to leave behind when you left? What was the hardest thing for you to forget, to say goodbye to?

**Brady:** I don't think anything, I was so enamored of coming that I was glad to get going I think.

**Paul:** Where did you have to go to get the ship?

**Brady:** To Londonderry, I think the port was Foyle and we took a tender ride. The harbor wasn't deep enough for the big ship to come in and we took a tender ride out to the big ship and got on there.

**Paul:** What was the name of the ship?

**Brady:** The name of it was Le Arcadia.

**Paul:** How did you get from your time, outside Belfast to London valley?

**Brady:** By train.

**Paul:** Do you remember anything about that train ride?

**Brady:** No.

**Paul:** We're going to pause just for a second and I'm going to put in a new tape and then we'll get you to America.

**Brady:** Okay.

**Paul:** Okay we're now beginning tape two with Joseph Brady who came from the north or Ireland to America in 1925 when he was 18 years old. Mr. Brady we were just talking about you arriving in Londonderry, you got on a tender that brought you out to the ship the Arcadia. How long did you stay in Londonderry before you could get on to the ship?

**Brady:** We didn't stay overnight. I think we got on the same afternoon. We got there in the morning and we get on in the afternoon.

**Paul:** Were you travelling with a group of people or are you by yourself?

**Brady:** I'm all by myself.

**Paul:** No one from the family went with you?

**Brady:** No.

**Paul:** What about anyone from town, from your town?

**Brady:** Nobody that I knew.

**Paul:** Nobody that you knew. Does anything stick out in your mind about the tender ride out to the ship?

**Brady:** No, I think it was very uneventful, we were directed where to go and we followed on. I guess we're so excited that we didn't think much of what we were doing in there.

**Paul:** Had you ever been on a large ship before?

**Brady:** No.

**Paul:** What did you think when you saw this ship that you had to go to by another boat? I mean what was going through your mind at that time?

**Brady:** I was thinking this was the biggest ship I ever saw in my life and I was surprised when we got on the ship that all the things that are on it, the rooms and all the dining rooms and all that kind of stuff.

**Paul:** Can you describe the inside of the ship for me? We can start with where you slept.

**Brady:** I slept in I guess in one of the lower decks, I think that’s where the cheaper passengers like myself slept and I remember there were four boys in the room, three more and myself. On either side there were two bunks, one up and one down on either side and four of us were in the room and we had running water, wash basin and that was all. I think we had to go out to a common shower for a bath.

**Paul:** Did you have a pot hole or anything in there at the cabin?

**Brady:** No, nothing.

**Paul:** Nothing, no pothole. What sticks out in your mind about the three men that you shared the cabin with if anything?

**Brady:** One of the men was going to Detroit, a young man like myself and he was telling us that he was going to get $5 a day working for Ford that his brother had a job and I said, "$5 a day that’s 2 pounds a day," Almost as much as I was making in a week at home. That’s one of the things that I've always remembered.

**Paul:** Describe the dining room area on the ship?

**Brady:** It was a big room and we sat at tables I think having about eight people at each table, it was tremendous big and the food was good and we were well treated as I remember.

**Paul:** Do you remember any of the meals or the kind of food that you weren't familiar with?

**Brady:** One of the things that I do remember was peppers, green peppers, sweet peppers. I never had peppers before but mostly all the food I was familiar with was mostly for breakfast, tea and toast and scrambled eggs and for lunch I remember it was potatoes and vegetables and we generally had some kind of meat either lamb or beef as lunch set and then the evening it was tea and sandwich or something like that as I remember.

**Paul:** Do you remember how much the passage cost?

**Brady:** No, I don't. By the way my brother had prepaid my passes, so I don't remember what it was.

**Paul:** Did you have any landing money with you?

**Brady:** Oh yes I had. I think you were supposed to have at least $50 and I had that much money.

**Paul:** Do you know how you carried that money?

**Brady:** Just in my wallet in my pocket.

**Paul:** Did the ship supply any kind of entertainment for the passengers?

**Brady:** I don't think so but we made our own entertainment. One of the men could play an accordion and they played the accordion and we danced on the deck and we had a heck of a good time.

**Paul:** Can you talk a little bit about the other people who were travelling with you, ages, nationality that sort of thing?

**Brady:** Most of them that we're travelling with us on our parts of the ship were immigrants. They were coming the first time to Ireland.

**Paul:** To America.

**Brady:** To America, one man I remember was an older man who had been in Ireland on a vacation and he was from [unclear 01:06:03] some place I don't remember and he was giving me advice, he said, "Really what you should do when you get to New York if you're going to stay in New York is get a job in wall street." He said, "What I mean is get a job as a porter or something or anything you can get a job." then he said, "Stay on Wall Street because that’s where the money is." I remember him telling me that.

**Paul:** Do you remember there giving you safety drills on the ship or anything like that?

**Brady:** No, I don't remember if they had anything like that.

**Paul:** Did you have any interaction with the ships staff at all, the captain, the steward?

**Brady:** No, their stewards were the people that we saw and they were mostly English. As I remember I think there were one or two of the boys were from the north of Ireland and they were stewards, that’s mainly what we did. The other people that worked around on the deck and submarine didn't talk or anything, we just watched them work something like that.

**Paul:** Were there women travelling as well as men?

**Brady:** Oh yeah, I think even more girls than men and of course the people in the upper decks were first class passengers and once in a while some of those people came down and watched us dancing and I guess thought that we were crazy or something but that happened.

**Paul:** How long did the ship take?

**Brady:** 10 days.

**Paul:** And what time of the year is this?

**Brady:** We arrived here the 3rd of June.

**Paul:** 3rd of June and did you have your luggage with you in the room?

**Brady:** Yes I did because it was only a very small suitcase I had.

**Paul:** That was it, you had the one suitcase?

**Brady:** Yeah, one.

**Paul:** Does anything else stick out in your mind about being on the ship?

**Brady:** I guess most people were sick on the ship, only me I wasn't sick. I never missed a meal. I was down for breakfast, dinner and supper, I was a good eater but most of my companions were sick for a while and then they got better and then of course after a week or so on the ship it get boring you know we were all bored.

**Paul:** Do you remember seeing the Statue of Liberty when the ship?

**Brady:** Oh yeah, we got here early in the morning, I guess the ship people told us that we were now in sight, so we all got up in the deck and a lot of people were crying but most people were jubilant as I was. I thought it was marvelous and then we were watching the people on the ferry because they were dressed differently than we were, the summer and they were all dressed in the light clothes which we didn't have those ever before. As I say some other people were just crying with emotion but so the girls were but we were just jubilant.

**Paul:** So in Ireland in June, am I to understand that you're still wearing heavy clothes.

**Brady:** Right, we're still. As a matter of fact till today they don't have any nice light suits like we have, they're all made heavy because summers are not very hot over there and the winters are quite cold and then it’s damp, so we wear heavier clothes.

**Paul:** And that was probably something that your brother didn't think to tell you?

**Brady:** Exactly right [laughter] but as soon as I got here he immediately got me a lighter suit.

**Paul:** So the ship comes into New York harbor, then what happens?

**Brady:** I guess we got on a ferry to take us to Ellis Island and I don't remember much about that unless the traveller aid I guess was on the ferry on the pendant TA, that’s traveller’s aid, so that they would make sure that we all knew where we were going and there was somebody meeting us.

**Paul:** I see so you became their responsibility?

**Brady:** Right.

**Paul:** So the ferry takes you out to Ellis Island, what happened there?

**Brady:** Then we were all lined up, I think the first thing we did was go through doctor’s examination and we had several doctors. One doctor listened to your heart, another doctor your eyes and looked at your hands and looked at your hair to make sure your hair was clean. Not that I knew but I heard about some girls had their hair cut off because there must have been lice or something in their hair but not in our group.

**Paul:** Can you describe what it all looked like on the inside or what sticks out in your mind about being there?

**Brady:** What sticks out even till today on my mind was how nice the people were to us. The doctor I saw in Ireland was very casual. He didn't speak to me at all. Here the doctors were smiling and talked to us like we were people and that stood at my mind.

As a matter of fact the doctor I had examining my teeth, I don't what else he was examining but he said, "Young man, what you do when you get to new york or you get New York get yourself a job advertising toothpaste because you got very nice teeth." He was kidding me and that was rather nice, that was one of the big things I stuck with and everybody that we come in contact was very cordial.

**Paul:** So the Ellis Island staff is working their best to put you at ease?

**Brady:** To put you at ease and get you through as easy as possible for you.

**Paul:** So you go through the series of doctors and they're checking you said the hair, the heart, the eyes, the mouth, anything else they were looking for?

**Brady:** Not that I know of.

**Paul:** Not in your case. What else did you have to go through while you were there?

**Brady:** Then we had to go through I guess immigration to make sure that you had your passport and you had a valid passport.

**Paul:** How did they do that? What was the process?

**Brady:** As a matter of fact they just took your passport and looked at you, maybe asked you a few questions. I don't remember and then they give that back to you and say, "You're all through now."

**Paul:** And when you were done--

**Brady:** Then you go on the ferry to come over to the [unclear 01:14:00].

**Paul:** Your brother didn't meet you at Ellis Island?

**Brady:** No, he met me at the [unclear 01:14:07].

**Paul:** Did they feed you at all in Ellis Island?

**Brady:** I don't remember, I don't think so because we weren't there that long.

**Paul:** How long do you think you were there?

**Brady:** I guess maybe tops three or four hours. I think that’s about all.

**Paul:** Did you see anything at Ellis Island that you had never seen before?

**Brady:** No.

**Paul:** No, so you got to the [unclear 01:14:33] and tell me about seeing your brother, you hadn't seen him since he left?

**Brady:** I hadn't seen him since he left. His friend was with him and of course they met me, they were glad to see me.

**Paul:** Did he look different to you in anyway?

**Brady:** Well he was dressed differently you know I never saw him dressed in a light colored shirt or I don't think he had any hat on and I do remember his friend had his jacket over his arm. He was in a short sleeve and I thought that was rather peculiar.

**Paul:** This very informal [crosstalk 01:15:14].

**Brady:** Informal, yes.

**Paul:** Where did he take you?

**Brady:** He took me over to the 2nd avenue elevator and we went north to 65th street, we get off at 65th street. He lived on 65th street on the corner of 3rd avenue on 65th street and [unclear 01:15:34] E 65th street.

**Paul:** Do you remember anything specific about being on the elevated train?

**Brady:** No, nothing but I do remember that I was wondering about the train being up in the air but nothing sticks out of my mind.

**Paul:** Describe his apartment, where he was living.

**Brady:** He lived up on the first floor. You went up a flight of stairs and there were two apartments on each floor and there was no bathroom, the toilet was in the hall used by both, we had a key and the other tenant had a key then you went in and you walked first into the kitchen and then from the kitchen you walked through a long the hallway, you walked into the bedroom first. First bedroom and then there was another bedroom and then the front room looked out on 65th street. No, the kitchen looked out on the 65th street and the bedroom looked out on the court as I say there was coal stove in the kitchen.

**Paul:** Did he have electricity in the apartment?

**Brady:** No. He had gas.

**Paul:** What do you remember about using gas light?

**Brady:** Well I was used to gas in Belfast, so I was quite familiar with that. The first time I saw gas you know how it used to have a little mantle on it and I felt the mantle of course it disintegrated in my hand so I knew enough to not touch the gas mantle. Through the rest of the rooms, I think gas light was in all of the rooms and there was a fireplace in the front room as I remember but I don't remember ever having a fire in the fire place. The kitchen stove was the heater of the apartment.

**Paul:** Like your house in Ireland?

**Brady:** Right.

**Paul:** Tell me what you did that first night, how did you spend the first night in America [chuckle]?

**Brady:** I don't remember, I guess I was tired I went to bed. Yes, I do remember. Some friends from Ireland came in to see me and we sat chatting for a long time and they were asking me about people in Ireland you know how they were doing and all of that, that kind of stuff so I do remember, we sat up late and then I just went to bed and we had tea before we went to bed. Tea and cake and stuff.

**Paul:** How long was it before you got your first job?

**Brady:** About two weeks.

**Paul:** So what did you do in that interim time? How did you spend those two weeks?

**Brady:** Mostly, my brother then had his first child who was a year old, John and I used to walk with his wife. When my brother went to work, I used to walk with his wife up to central park and we sat in central park and then she would go shopping and I'd go shopping and I’d mind the baby outside while she did the shopping and then come back and i wanted to go to work and my brother said, "No, take it easy for a while."

So I think for two weeks he wouldn't let me go to work and finally [unclear 01:19:37] and I didn't know how to go about looking for a job. I didn't know that you can walk into some place and say, "I am looking for work, are you taking any applications or something," I didn't know that. He had to come along and get me a job.

**Paul:** The wife, this woman. What was her name?

**Brady:** Catherine.

**Paul:** Did she help in anyway? Did she help you to adjust?

**Brady:** Oh yes.

**Paul:** I mean what kind of things did she tell you about to help you to ease into this?

**Brady:** She told me about mostly how things were done in America rather than how they were done in Ireland and to be careful when I went out and not start talk to any strangers or anything like that and I think that’s about all. And then of course all these other men who are older than me from home they came and took me out and took me out to lunch and took me out to dinner and stuff like that once in a while.

**Paul:** Having come from where you did in Ireland, would you have been inclined to talk to strangers if you didn't know you shouldn't have?

**Brady:** No, I don't think so because in Belfast I had been taught that and that’s a big city everybody was running around, everybody was doing their own thing.

**Paul:** What kinds of things did you discover in New York that were maybe completely new to you in those two weeks? Things that held a particular fascination for you.

**Brady:** Ice cream parlor. They were out there corner of 3rd Avenue on 65th street, there was an ice cream parlor and I had ice-cream of course but I never had ice cream soda, I never had a sandy and of course now being in America and because I had someone when I came here I had money to go and get an ice-cream soda.

That’s one of the thing that stuck in my mind, in central park we used to go to the- I don't know what monument it is, the [unclear 01:22:23] in central park we used to city there enough of fascinating and I think that’s about all.

**Paul:** Were there any discoveries that you made of things that you didn’t like that made you wearier or uncomfortable in the city?

**Brady:** No, I don't think so. I think I liked everything that I saw. I was very happy that I was here and I wrote to my mother and told her that I was here safe and that everything was good and that my brother was feeling well and that’s about all I think.

**Paul:** Well, tell me about getting that first job, how did your brother help you to do?

**Brady:** My brother didn't know anything but you just need a job either, didn't know much about it because I don't know how he had got the job in the subway but he didn't know the union, they called it the brother hood that time.

**Paul:** And he was as you said already a subway conductor?

**Brady:** A subway conductor yeah and he brought me down to the union hall and he said to one of them, "And my brother is here and he would like to get a job." And they said, "Well, alright take him down to 165 Broadway," and he gave me a note and I went down to 165 Broadway and presented this note [unclear 01:23:53] office down there at the headquarters and the man said, "Alright, you go to work." And he said, "You have to get a uniform." "A hat," he said." is all you need now but then you will have to get a uniform when you get paid."

That’s all and my brother took me for my first job and they put me on train with another conductor and he showed me what to do. I got paid for that and then there was a regular guard that called him at that time, you were a guard first before you're conductor and went out to work the next day without any jam.

I went up shaping up, I sat down with some other men there who on the extra list and me being hired last I was at the bottom of the extra list and when somebody didn't show up for the job they called on turn and of course I was last to be called and then I went working on my own and I did that for three months, I was on the extra list and then finally as I moved up in seniority I was able to pick a job for myself.

**Paul:** And what job did you pick?

**Brady:** As a guard, there called guards at time, they were on each train. I worked the local train, on each train there was a man on each car and I figured he opened the doors when the car coming in and then pull the bell for the next pass to motormen then he preceded to the next station. When the train stopped the station, you opened the door and you stayed on the door, the side door behind you, you just threw up a handle and not open the door and then when everybody was in you close it down and you got your doors closed then pass the bell.

**Paul:** So that was all done manually?

**Brady:** Everything was manual. All manual.

**Paul:** The doors were open.

**Brady:** All manually yeah.

**Paul:** Do you have some stories about your experience working on the subways and things that you remember happening during your time?

**Brady:** No, it seemed to be all so routine I don't remember anything unless I go through routine.

**Paul:** How long did you work for the subway?

**Brady:** I guess maybe about a year.

**Paul:** Do you remember what you were paid?

**Brady:** Yes, I was paid 50cents an hour.

**Paul:** And you remember what kind of schedule you were on.

**Brady:** When I started first the schedule changed, you reported for work and some days you didn't get any work. You went home without work but you reported for work and then if you reported after let’s say 6 O'clock in the morning maybe it will 7 or 7:30 before you're going to work and then whatever kind of a job I've worked for that day and so many jobs were as we call swing jobs.

You made two trips in the morning and come back in the afternoon made two trips in the rush hour, that’s what they did there and your pay varied because some days you worked the whole day and holidays and Saturday you do and you had to work Sunday and Saturday too.

**Paul:** Because nowadays in 1995 we hear so much about subway crime and that sort of thing, in your time working as a subway guard do you remember instances of a dangerous situation or any kind of crime going on at that time?

**Brady:** No.

**Paul:** Would it have been your job to stop that? I mean was that another part of your job?

**Brady:** No, actually it wasn't if anything on tour had happened on my train the only thing that I would do is try to keep out if and try and call the policeman.

**Paul:** Were there phones?

**Brady:** There are phones all along there still are, every 600 feet in all the subways, there's a blue light with the phone there but I never saw anything on tour happened. The people were all nice, gently come in with a smile and you didn't have any reason to have any trouble.

**Paul:** Were the subways crowded at that time?

**Brady:** Very crowded, very crowded.

**Paul:** Because these are the days before air conditioning.

**Brady:** Correct [laughter] and as a matter of fact I worked on the platforms sometimes at 125th street and I remember there were four of us at one door and then the station master would come and used to help us and what we did there was bars up there with chains across you kept the people that wanted to get on the train, you kept them back before the doors open to let the people off and then took down the chain from both sides that swarmed into the car and push everybody back and we let them- stood back for a few minutes and let them see what they can do best and then after a few struggle we push them in and pull the doors open.

**Paul:** That’s very interesting [laughter]. Do you remember there ever being a medical emergency on any of the trains that you were on?

**Brady:** One of the things I remember was a suicide, somebody jumped in front of the train and what we did then the motor men or the conductor, the first thing he did was cut off the power and then phoned in. He just said, "I got a man under the train," or a lady under the train, then you stood back and in a very short time the policemen, [unclear 01:30:44] and it was up to them to get the body out of there and then when they give you the okay you had to make sure that everybody [unclear 01:30:53] call back and tell them you put the power back on again, so that was I think one time.

**Paul:** Did you enjoy this work that you were doing?

**Brady:** Yes, I did. As a matter of fact I went back to it that’s where I spent my life on. My sister in law wasn't too happy with me working in the subway, so she was getting her groceries in the ANP at that time.

**Paul:** What was her objection?

**Brady:** I don't know, I think maybe the irregular hours that she would see her husband working and I was possibly working but she thought that working in the ANP grocery stores was a very nice job so she asked the manager there, "You think you can get a job for my brother in law?" And he said, "of course," he said and he wrote an address and he said, "Go down to this address and see they maybe hire him." So, I went down there and they hired me right away and I said, "Well, I can't go to work right away, I have to give some notice to the subway people that I'm quitting." Which I did then I went to work for the ANP.

**Paul:** But how did you feel about being in that position? I mean if you were enjoying your work in the subway, how did you feel about--?

**Brady:** I was enjoying my work but again I didn't like the Sunday work. Every day working all rest up on Sunday and here I was with a uniform and working on Saturdays. I didn't like working Saturdays and Sundays, then there was no day off in that time in the subways you worked seven days. This other place I'm sure been off Sunday, one day a week off.

**Paul:** And you say that you eventually went back to work?

**Brady:** Oh yes, after I think I worked about four years for the ANP then back to work.

**Paul:** And went back to work in the subway?

**Brady:** In the subway, yeah.

**Paul:** And how long did you stay there the second time?

**Brady:** 39 years.

**Paul:** Wow, doing different kinds of jobs in that amount of time?

**Brady:** Well, actually yes. I started off as a guard and then I went to the school and became motorman and then the city subway opened up, so you could take an examination and go for that, so I was I was [unclear 01:33:53] sea job was good so I took the examination and passed that and got a job as a [unclear 01:34:05] that was a desk job in the city square and I stayed there for the rest of my life and actually that was the entrance point then you could take your examinations and revamp.

So I took examination and became the train dispatcher then I got called in and I was what we call crew dispatcher, I was in charge of all the men’s jobs and picking jobs and all that. After a while I had a crew of 30 in my office and it involves several things you know this dealing with the union and all of that and I like that very much that’s for real.

I finally took another job which was the highest you could go in civil service and I got that job, I think number three in the list and I got that job but I had to go back working nights again so I took voluntary demotion and went back to my old job which I wounded up with.

**Paul:** During that time in your professional career were you ever prejudiced? Did you ever experience any prejudice because you were foreign born?

**Brady:** No.

**Paul:** And did you not get a job that you wanted or?

**Brady:** No.

**Paul:** What about just in your social life, did you ever find any kind of bigotry because you were Irish?

**Brady:** No and I don't think so. I never experienced that and later on as you know the subway now we've got a lot of black people in and I always had great rapport with the black people and I had some very [unclear 01:36:18] immensely well with them and I had some very good friends [unclear 01:36:23]. As a matter of fact I wounded up with a black man as my supervisor and I never really experienced any discrimination.

**Paul:** Did you ever go back to Ireland? Did you ever want to go back for a visit or?

**Brady:** Oh, I did. I went back several times.

**Paul:** What was the first time you went back?

**Brady:** 1952 I think.

**Paul:** Okay, so you've been here quite a while.

**Brady:** I've been here a long time.

**Paul:** What did it feel to go back to Ireland?

**Brady:** It felt funny [chuckle]. I was married then, I went back with my wife and we went to visit her family and the first thing I remember was when I got to again to Belfast. A girl who went to school with me met me and she's a nurse in Belfast now and she said, "The reason I came to meet you Joe is I took some time off because your mother is in hospital and I didn't want you to get home and find out your mother in the hospital." And she said, "In Armagh, in the city of Armagh." And she said, "If you go there and tell them that you just came through, while their visiting hours or not you can get in to her."

**Paul:** What was the name of the town and the hospital?

**Brady:** Armagh A-R-M- A-G-H, same as county I was born. So that’s what I did then when I got home of course a lot of people came in to see me and all, big welcome and all this kind of stuff.

**Paul:** How did it feel to actually be there and what kind of feelings did you have when you were looking at all of this?

**Brady:** I was thinking that I was lucky that I was here now [laughter] and our house was so small, the roads were so narrow and I didn't realize that I was thinking that way for a while until I got [unclear 01:38:46]. Of course I was happy to be back, see all the people and got a welcome from them all. I enjoyed my visit.

**Paul:** You mentioned that your wife's family was in Ireland.

**Brady:** That’s my first wife. This is our second marriage for both Rose and I.

**Paul:** I see what year were you married the first time?

**Brady:** 1929.

**Paul:** 1929 and what was your first wife's name?

**Brady:** Sarah.

**Paul:** And her maiden name?

**Brady:** Cunnaf. C-U-N-N-A-F.

**Paul:** And then when did you marry Mrs. Brady?

**Brady:** 14 year ago when my wife died.

**Paul:** And her first name is Rose, I know and what is her maiden name?

**Brady:** Its [unclear 01:39:46]. I can't say it [laughter].

**Paul:** Is Mrs. Brady born in this country?

**Brady:** Yes, she is.

**Paul:** Do you have children from either marriage?

**Brady:** Yeah, from my marriage not from Rose's marriage. I have a lot of children. I have three children, two girls and a boy and among them they have 13 grandchildren. One of my grandchildren is dead, 11 are married and 1 is not married and I have at the moment, I have 31 great grandchildren [chuckle], so I have a big family.

**Paul:** Quite a brood. How do you think your life would have been different if you had never come to the United States?

**Brady:** It’s difficult to say. My younger brother had a very good life in Ireland and he did very well. He was a bread server, worked for a big company.

**Paul:** Bread Server?

**Brady:** Bread Server you know he had a van and went around the country selling bread, actually selling bread and he made out very well and wound up with a nice pension and also had a social security or whatever they call it over there and he had a car and a nice house and all so he did alright and one of my other brothers had two boys- he had a boy and a girl.

The boy is a vice president in one of colleges in Belfast and his daughter stayed home and her husband has a big business there and has a great big house and very nice car and they did alright so it’s difficult to say how I'd have been.

**Paul:** You might have made up well?

**Brady:** Right, I might have made up pretty good but that’s difficult to say.

**Paul:** When you think of yourself and your nationality, how do you think of yourself? Do you think of yourself as Irish or as American or?

**Brady:** As Irish American [laughter].

**Paul:** Did you become a citizen?

**Brady:** Oh definitely, as soon as I could.

**Paul:** What year was that?

**Brady:** I come in 25'. It must have been in 1930.

**Paul:** Took five years.

**Brady:** I took five years or maybe a little ahead of that, I don't know.

**Paul:** Can you talk a little bit about the process of becoming a citizen, what you had to go through?

**Brady:** That time you had to get first papers first. Oh, I guess maybe only three years because before you could apply for citizenship you had to have your first papers two years then you applied for citizenship and of course the big thing was that we were so scared.

You had a big book or a big pamphlet about different things you know the constitution, what’s the constitution? How many senators are and lots of technical questions you know then you went before a judge and he questions you on this and then you got your citizen papers. And of course I was scared to death and I think the judges, they looked at you and they could figure out that you were you weren't so bad, you didn't have any difficulties.

**Paul:** But you were so nervous?

**Brady:** I was so nervous, very nervous.

**Paul:** How did it make you feel when you passed?

**Brady:** Now I can vote, I’m great and American citizen and I couldn't wait the first election to come along so I voted.

**Paul:** Do you remember who?

**Brady:** No, I don't but I know every election even little election I always voted.

**Paul:** It meant a lot to you.

**Brady:** Of course to have a vote.

**Paul:** I guess my final question for you is now your 89, now you had a long and very interesting life, what are your secrets? What has contributed to you having a long and happy life? What things have you lived by that has contributed to this?

**Brady:** I don't know [chuckle]. I ask my doctor and he says, "It must be your genes," and I don't know. I don't think I did anything in excess, I was always modern and I think that helps a little bit. I always up to 20 years ago I smoked, I still take a drink. Now, I eat moderately and my wife is kind of a fuss budget about vitamins all that kind stuff and may that helped.

**Paul:** Did your parents or someone in your family instill philosophies of life when you were younger you know rules to live by that have always stuck with you?

**Brady:** No, I think they said, "Go out and do the best she can't [laughter]."

**Paul:** Well, Mr. Brady I want to thank you very much, we've been talking now for an hour forty six minutes, that’s a long time.

**Brady:** That’s quite quickly.

**Paul:** This is Paul Seacrest signing off with Joseph Brady on Monday September 25th, 1995 here in whiting New Jersey. Thank you very much sir.

**Brady:** And you're quite welcome thank you.